

# Monarchs decline as Milkweed vanish

## Roundup threatens millions of winged ambassadors

BY VANESSA HOUK

Monarch butterflies are alive for just a handful of weeks and yet in that short time they fly right into the depths of our imaginations. There’s much about them that we do not know and perhaps this is their greatest lesson-- that man can watch and wonder. As scientists and wildlife preservationists have documented the rapid decline of monarchs, efforts are being made to preserve these sacred creatures the Australians call “the wanderers”. The story of the migration of North American monarchs is full of mysteries. We know that they make an annual two way migration but how they know where to go and exactly what happens to them along the way is unknown. We know that they seem to like to travel in swarms. In March, the Mexican monarchs

become active and as they start to fly north and east, they search for milkweed plants where they can lay their eggs, therefore ensuring the next generations survival. The migrating females lay eggs as they travel, recolonizing the southern United States along the way. Those caterpillars turn into a second and third generation of butterflies and they are the ones who will continue the migration across the US and into Canada. They somehow know where to go as they land in the very places where their parents once lived. The fourth generation of monarchs somehow know how to migrate back to the homes of their ancestors and do so in early Fall where they settle in parts of southern California and Mexico until the following Spring when the cycle begins all over again. In February of this year, President Obama, Mexico’s President Peña Nieto, and Canada’s Prime



Destruction of habitat threaten the Monarch Photo via animalstown.com

Minister Harper united in a three country quest to preserve the monarch butterfly and to take steps to protect their migration from Canada to the US and Mexico. That annual migration covers 2,800 miles across the three continents. “This butterfly migration

reflects an ancient bond between three nations that pre-date the countries themselves. Business as usual may permanently sever this bond, but today’s pledge gives us renewed hope that we can save the monarch migration for

MONARCHS, 11

# Rogue Valley celebrates indymedia week

10th Annual Independent Media Week  
April 13-19, 2014

BY JASON HOUK

Ashland Oregon’s 10th Annual Independent Media Week celebrates local independent media producers, activists and community groups working to ensure that, “a well-informed citizenry is a cornerstone of democracy”. Running April 13-19, Independent Media Week is a grassroots campaign to inform and empower the community by showcasing local efforts and to expand and inspire local media production.

In April 2005, the City of Ashland officially proclaimed its first Independent Media Week to acknowledge the work being done to increase community access to public meetings and records through investment in our media infrastructure, fiber network and public television resources.

The city’s proclamation reads in part that an informed citizenry is a cornerstone of democracy and depends on unrestrained press, which provides greater access to information, more points of view and greater diversity of thought and fact. The proclamation further warns that the trend toward the consolidation of media ownership results in media that hinder public awareness by excluding minority and dissenting viewpoints.

Every year since, a coalition of local independent media organizations have asked the City of Ashland to proclaim the 3rd week in April, “Independent Media Week”. The Ashland City Council is expected to read this year’s proclamation at the city council meeting on April 15.

The Rogue Valley is fortunate to have a strong coalition of community partners and organizations to organize activities and programs

# Jacksonville protest case before U.S. Supreme Court

BY MICHAEL “MOOKIE” MOSS, ACLU PLAINTIFF

In March of this year, the Jacksonville police riot celebrates its almost-tenth anniversary by taking a trip to Washington D.C. and landing on the desk of the United States Supreme Court. Under review by the high court is whether the respondents (me and my fellow plaintiff demonstrators) sufficiently alleged there was clear First Amendment discrimination on the part of the Secret Service and whether the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals erred when it denied the Secret Service qualified immunity for its role in the events that took place nearly 10 years ago. For those present that night in Jacksonville, the answer to the question of First Amendment discrimination couldn’t be clearer. The large multigenerational group of anti-Bush demonstrators assembled in front of the Jacksonville Inn faced police-fired projectiles which were filled with chemical irritants, canisters of hand held pepper spray, and submission by baton, while the pro-Bush crowd equidistant from the

dining President faced not a word of admonishment. My experience that night began after finishing evening farm chores and hustling down the hill to join the unwelcoming party already in full swing. George W. Bush, embroiled in controversy and just weeks away from his re-election bid, had spent the day stumping in Medford and rallying his base. With a dubious foreign war gathering steam, and a series of hotly debated domestic policies surrounding resource extraction (which profoundly affected our rural community), emotion in the crowd was palpable. The demonstration, crafted by organizers Shelley Elkovich and Anna Vine, had been billed as a family friendly gathering aimed at sending a strong message to the visiting President. Earlier, Anna and Shelley had cleared this demonstration with police Chief Towe of Jacksonville and Sheriff Winters of Jackson County. By assuring the police the demonstration would remain on the sidewalk and be law abiding, they received permission from city and county law enforcement. Shortly after my arrival and



In October, 2004, a peaceful protest turned into a police riot. Now the U.S. Supreme Court will hear the case. Photo via ACLU

inclusion in the crowd of 250 plus strong, word circulated that the President had changed his original plans and was now dining in the restaurant adjacent to our rally. This new information only fueled excitement by making it clear that our words and presence could undoubtedly be heard and felt by the President. This enthusiasm was met with ominous signs

of what was to come. With helicopters buzzing overhead, throngs of police clad in full battle regalia arrived on an armored personnel carrier. One particular group wearing balaclavas, with their badges and names covered in black cloth, oriented themselves several lines deep on the same sidewalk we had been permitted to use. As the riot police began

RIOT, 7

INDYMEDIA, 7



# Editorials & Opinion

## Dear readers...

As I write this I can see budding wisteria vines out my front window and the bees, hummingbirds and I all know that spring is finally here. It seems as if the whole neighborhood is awash with color, the light pink cherry and plum blossoms, the last of the cheerful yellow daffodils and the old fashioned dainty bleeding hearts are showing off. Have you been soaking up some sunshine and enjoying local beauty?

We kicked off the month of March with a fundraiser with the help of Occupy Medford and many friends. We were humbled by the number of people who came out to support us-- thank you! To hear that you value RVCP and want to continue to have a publication dedicated

to tackling social issues gives us the courage to keep going for a long, long time to come.

We have a great variety of articles in this months edition and we hope that you will keep submitting pieces on topics you are passionate about. This is your community press. We welcome your letters to the editor, poetry and artwork. We can print articles of up to 1,000 words and letters can be 400 words or less. We look forward to hearing from you!

Something special about April is that it marks the 10 year anniversary of Ashland's Independent Media Week (April 13-20). A free press is the backbone of democracy, but my guess is that if you are reading this you probably

already realize that.

April is also a good month to get married as Jason and I are celebrating our 20th year together on April Fools Day. I know our families all wondered if we were pulling off an expensive prank back then, and it was a fun way to begin a life together. Besides, there's no fool like a married fool.

One last thing, are you a registered voter in Jackson County or have you moved since the last election? The May election is an important one and we want you to make sure that your vote will count. You must register before April 29 and you can do that online at <http://tinyurl.com/2c6yqhy>.

Kindly, Vanessa and Jason Houk



A big crowd turned out to celebrate the third birthday of the Rogue Valley Community Press at the Talent Community Center on March 1st. Photo by Alan Hallmark



Jef Ramsey & Kathryn Casternovia played and sang. Photo by Alan Hallmark



### Your Social Justice News Resource

The Rogue Valley Community Press (RVCP) is your local resource for social justice news. We don't pretend to hide our biases: RVCP is a publication for the working class and a platform for marginalized voices in our community. Published monthly, it is available through subscription, and local retail locations.

The opinions expressed in RVCP are those of the authors, and not necessarily the editorial staff or advertisers.

Is your voice missing in RVCP? What's on your mind? We're listening! Send us your story ideas, articles, letters to the editor, guest opinions, poetry or artwork for publication. We welcome unsolicited submissions. We especially welcome articles covering local topics and events. Send submissions to [editor@rvcommunitypress.com](mailto:editor@rvcommunitypress.com). If there are topics you would like to see covered, you can send ideas and feedback to the same address.

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Subscriptions are \$40 for twelve issues mailed to the address of your choice. Sign up online or send us a check.

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## Letter to the Editor Time for a third party?

To answer that question, we need to ask ourselves why? Is our government serving the citizens well? Is it protecting civil rights, natural resources, health and welfare? The Supreme Court says that the Multinational Corporations are people, and money is speech. They are deciding if the one percent of our people, with their vast amounts of money, can spend unlimited amounts to influence elections and they are deciding on a suit by Halliburton to severally limit class-action suits against unlawful actions of corporations. Does it make sense to reduce the power of the EPA's ability to enforce laws protecting us from pollution? How can our elected legislators to represent us, when they take money from special interest groups, who are not interested in the people?

Why can't our legislators provide us with a fair tax system, that doesn't destroying the working class which built this country? It is obvious by the discussions in Washington DC that our legislators are afraid of the corporations. They are afraid of opposing the concept that corporations are people because they need their money for their election campaigns. How absurd is that? It's time to say "I am not going to take it anymore!" We can join a social action group. We can Vote Green Party.

I love the story about the frog who was placed in a pot of water in which it felt comfortable, then when the heat was gradually turned up and it was cooked before he even knew it. The

other frog was placed in the hot water, so what did it do? It jumped out of course. Are we like the first frog? There has been a concerted effort by big business, especially since the Reagan Administration to give more and more power to the corporate giants. They said that this would create jobs. Well it did! The only problem is that it created low pay sweatshop jobs in third world counties, then they moved manufacturing over there. Why should corporations care about the welfare of the people? Their responsibility is make profits for the shareholders, and guess what, the stock market is doing just great.

Are you ready to make a difference? We can make our voices heard at the polls. We can support local business, and agriculture. We can let our legislators know we are watching them. We can join social action groups and participate in events that support our values. Here in Jackson County, we need stand up and be counted. The Green Party supports fair elections, single payer health care, jobs, justice, education healthy non-genetically engineered foods, and a healthy planet. We want a world that values its people, more than the profits of the corporations.

As Nike, who makes shoes in China, says: "Just do it"

Liberty & Justice  
Dave Hyde

Life

Celebrating kindness: Ashland Resource Center  
Community center provides resources, casework and outreach.

BY VANESSA HOUK

Inside a nondescript building on Clover Lane in Ashland, rays of sunshine stream through the glass doorways as people find their way in. Between colorful photos and cheerful paintings from local artists that grace the walls of the open space and the small, sweet home-like touches including fresh flowers on the countertop, it's a welcoming place. Although in it's infancy, Ashland's Resource Center has deep roots within our community and the story of how it came to be is one that demonstrates how tenacity mixed with a lot of volunteer effort can literally open doors.

Ashland has a long history of providing some services to homeless and low income residents, part of which began thirty years ago when a number of Ashland's churches banded together. Since then agencies have come and gone, but residents' collective resolve to help others remains strong.

About a year ago the Ashland City Council offered to front \$50,000 annually for two years to a local nonprofit with a

stipulation that by year three, the chosen nonprofit would be financially sound and would able to continue to provide services for homeless and low income people without further assistance from city coffers. Two groups submitted proposals, ACCESS and Options for homeless residents of Ashland (OHRA) and the city council encouraged them to combine forces to open up a day use center which would provide assistance and resources for those in need. The center provides services to homeless people, seniors, veterans, and the working poor and is set up to offer case management, so that folks can get support in whatever area they need; housing, healthcare, job search, and much more.

The center is staffed by one paid part time manager, Leigh Madsen who is a long time volunteer at Uncle Food's Diner, the weekly community meal at the First United Methodist Church. A host of other community volunteers have stepped in to fill roles ranging from assisting folks



with programs that provide free cell phones to helping someone navigate the sometimes confusing world of social security and/or disability.

Madsen mentioned that one of the most difficult barriers low income people face is not having identification. "Can you imagine what it's like to try to operate without a basic ID, a birth certificate or social security card? In Jackson County you can't even get a bus pass," he said. He described how poverty chips away at a person's self esteem that for some folks it becomes normal to expect that your needs are someone else's inconvenience and reflected on how hard it is to come back from that.

Within just a few weeks of opening the doors, there are already success stories. One man, a veteran is now in

housing. Another man was able to get his birth certificate, identification he sorely needed, out of Mississippi. On the day of our interview they saw 15-16 people and 3 of those people were signed up for health care.

"What feeds me is the changes that happens in someone's life," says Madsen as he ponders the early successes of the center. "You see a change in someone's perception as they walk out of here with a lighter step and you know that at least for right now, at this time, they are lighter, brighter people."

The Ashland Resource Center will offer portable showers and laundry services as soon as they meet the conditional use permit requirements for the city of Ashland.

Ashland Community  
Resource Center

570 B Clover Lane, Ashland  
(right next to the Ashland  
Emergency Food Bank)

Hours Tuesday-Saturday  
9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Wish list:

- ☐ 20-30 gallon (large) Rubbermaid containers
- ☐ Large wardrobe mirrors
- ☐ towels
- ☐ entrance mats
- ☐ potable water hose (100 ft)
- ☐ #10 electric extension cord
- ☐ 3' x 5' shower mats
- ☐ 2" black pipe (100 ft)
- ☐ ¾" PVC fittings (100 ft)
- ☐ couplings (90's)
- ☐ vehicle hazard flares
- ☐ jack stands (4)
- ☐ hydraulic bob jacks (2)
- ☐ 2 pop up canopies (10 x 10's or bigger)
- ☐ flotation tank, sump pump, 100 ft black pipe
- ☐ fire extinguisher
- ☐ slick pipe (200 feet)
- ☐ Volunteers !!!

A letter for my Granddaughter

BY AMY LAWS

To my Granddaughter, there is an old Chinese proverb that states: "women hold up half the sky." Women make up half of this earth, and are just as equally responsible of it. Being a woman doesn't mean you have to be a princess waiting for your prince, a submissive housewife, or that you have to dedicate your life to looking beautiful in the eyes of society. Being a woman doesn't mean that you are restricted to a neat little gender role, it means that you opportunities are limitless. There will inevitably come a day when you are told otherwise, and when that day comes, I want you to remember that all humans, regardless of gender identity, are equal. I trust that you will work towards a future where women will be treated as equals.

When reflecting on my past, I find that all of my childhood dreams revolved around what I thought would be an expected career. I challenge you aspire to be whatever you find joy in; even if it is considered to be a "man's job". Do not limit yourself to becoming a nurse or a flight attendant, but also do not let anyone look down upon you for choosing to do those things if you wish too. If you find yourself in a male dominated profession,

do not let anyone convince you that you are not capable of becoming a leader. There is a popular saying amongst the girls of my generation that I particularly dislike, "Act like a lady, think like a boss." People that follow this ideology are not striving towards equality. As long as people keep insinuating that ladies and bosses need to be put into separate categories, we will never fully be equal. I want you to be a lady and a boss; there is no reason to separate the way you think and act. Most importantly, women of your generation should never subject themselves to a pay gap. Women and men doing the same job should receive the same income, and there is no sound reason as to why they shouldn't be.

The way women are portrayed in the media hinders the battle towards equality tremendously. The women of your generation should never let themselves be objectified by men. Occasionally the entertainment industry will create the illusion of a strong female character, but she will be hidden behind a beautiful mask of a seductive villainess without a moral code, or a beautiful but insecure woman who can't find happiness in life, without the guidance of a man. The women

of your generation shouldn't have to suffer the repercussions of the media's insistence to subliminally reinforce gender roles. Violence against women should never be tolerated. The media should never be able to point fingers to victims and find reasons why to direct blame towards women. No one will dare blame you for wearing the wrong outfit, deciding to have a few drinks on a night out, and not carrying weapons to fend off an attacker. You will not be scared into not being outspoken about an attack from fear of being blamed.

In the words of Constance Baker Mottley, "Something which you think is impossible now is not impossible in another decade." I want you to take these words to heart, and know that women will be able to overcome all the challenges put upon them. I want you to remember that women need to continue to advocate for equality and until everything in this letter becomes reality.

Amy Laws is a Ashland High School senior. Her entry is the first place winner in the 2014 International Women's Day essay contest for middle and high school students.

WILPF essay contest  
celebrates women

BY VANESSA HOUK

Dozens of people came out on International Women's Day to honor young, local writers. On Saturday March 8, the Rogue Valley branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) hosted a tea and the winners of their second annual student essay contest were celebrated.

"The history of International Women's Day invites us to preserve the past, honor the present and educate the future," said Jill Mackie.

Middle school and high school students were asked to answer the following question: "What will the future look like when women have true equality? Compare that future with women's opportunities today."

14 thoughtful essays were submitted and after careful deliberation WILPF members chose the following winners:

**High School**  
Amy Laws, 1st place, Senior Ashland High School (\$100)  
Grace St. Clair- Bates, 2nd place, Senior Ashland High School (\$75)  
Amanda Nash 3rd place, Senior Ashland High School (\$25)  
**Middle School:**  
Sierra Repp: 7th grade, Ashland Middle School. (\$100)

The first International Women's Day took place in Chicago on February 28, 1909. It is now recognized on March 8 around the world with an annual theme. In 2014 there is an emphasis on how gender equality, empowerment of women, women's full enjoyment of human rights and the eradication of poverty are essential to economic and social development. It also stresses the vital role of women as agents of development.

Founded in 1915, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) is one of the world's oldest peace organizations. The Ashland branch of WILPF is a community of local women working together towards a common goal of peace and justice. Ashland WILPF are sponsors of the annual Hiroshima/Nagasaki Vigil and International Women's Day Celebrations. Meetings are held on the first Friday of the month at 1PM at the Ashland Library and are open to the public.

Visit a meeting and you will find a warm welcome. For more information, contact Jill Mackie at (541) 488-9286 or email: jmackie@mind.net



# News bites



Members of the Jackson County Sheriff Employee Association (JCSEA) were invited to a candidate forum to help their members decide who they want to vote for in the upcoming sheriff race in the May mid term elections. While the union is not endorsing any one candidate, the votes they gathered internally are interesting. Bob Sergi received the highest percentage of the votes with 52%, Corey Falls came in with 29% of the votes, and Sheriff Mike Winters came in with 4% of the votes.

15% of their members voted to not support any of the above-mentioned candidates at the primary election. Board President Ben Fazio said, “Although, there was not a 2/3 vote to support one of the candidates, I believe the percentages show an accurate representation of our members concerns regarding the future of our department. Thank you to every member of the JCSEA, as well as, to each of the three candidates who took the time to address our membership. We look forward to continuing our quest moving forwards towards a partnership with whoever is at the helm of the Sheriff’s Office and stand fast in our ultimate goal of labor peace.”



Where’s Walden? Senator Greg Walden (R-Oregon) sent out letters to his constituents, saying he was attempting to cut government waste. The letter claims that President Obama was going to cut cost of living adjustments (COLA) on social security. A week later Obama announced that wasn’t happening. Who paid for the postage on those letters that tried to scare seniors into thinking their president was working against them? Taxpayers! Don’t forget about those promises to cut government waste!

Oregon lawmakers have introduced Senate Bill 1556, which would place a proposal to legalize the adult use of marijuana on the statewide ballot. The bill was approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee in a 3-2 vote and the measure now awaits action from the Senate Rules Committee. If the Senate Bill is approved by members of both the House and Senate, the measure would go before state voters in the general election this November. If it is then approved by voters, new regulations legalizing marijuana would be drafted by the legislature and go into effect in 2015.



McKenzie River Gathering (MRG) Foundation received a three year \$175,000 grant from Meyers Memorial Trust (MMT) to further grassroots efforts. MRG has a long history of funding many southern Oregon nonprofits including KSKQ Community Radio, UNETE, Red Earth Descendents, Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice and Lotus Rising. “We greatly appreciate Meyer Memorial Trust’s confidence in our work and we are thrilled to partner with one of Oregon’s largest foundations,” says MRG Foundation Executive Director Sharon Gary-Smith. “MRG is excited to leverage this grant to strengthen our support of social justice work in Oregon!”



The largest American multinational companies parked an additional \$206 billion of profits in offshore accounts last year, according to Bloomberg, bringing the total amount of profits stashed where U.S. tax officials can’t touch them up to about two trillion dollars.

More Americans used buses, trains and subways in 2013 than in any year since 1956 as service improved, local economies grew and travelers increasingly sought alternatives to the automobile for trips within metropolitan areas, the American Public Transportation Association reported in March. The trade group said in its annual report that 10.65 billion passenger trips were taken on transit systems during the year, surpassing the post-1950s peak of 10.59 billion in 2008, when gas prices rose to \$4 to \$5 a gallon. Stronger economic growth is playing an important role in the increased use of public transit, as more people are using the systems to get to an increasing number of jobs, the association reported, and transit agencies are nurturing growth by expanding their systems or improving services.



Meanwhile Swiss Parliament is considering an initiative which would pay each resident a basic living wage of about 2500 francs or \$2,000 a month, regardless of whether the resident is working or not. It would also make it illegal for Swiss employers to pay less than that to any working employee. The group, Basic Income Initiative gathered over 100,000 signatures on petitions proposing the idea that if their basic needs are met, people would have the freedom to achieve their dreams. “Imagine you are being born and society tells you ‘Welcome, you will be cared for, and asks you what you want to do with your life, what is your calling? Imagine that feeling, that’s a whole different atmosphere,” says Daniel Straub who is the Co-founder of Basic Income Initiative. The unemployment rate in Switzerland is 3 percent. The Swiss Parliament is expected to vote on this sometime this year.

# KSKQ wattage increase will reach Phoenix, Medford and beyond

BY MAYA MOORE

KSKQ, a small community-run radio station based in Ashland, is expanding its power to serve more towns in the Rogue Valley. Seven years ago, listeners who wanted to tune in to the non-profit station had to be within walking distance


Bench joined the board of the Multicultural Association of Southern Oregon, the non-profit organization that holds the broadcasting license. His efforts to get the station on the air have involved everything from filling out paperwork to jack hammering a trench on Mt. Ashland. Bench said he feels




Adam Senf, known by his radio name Selecta’ A.D., hosts the reggae show Taste of Consciousness Tuesday afternoons on KSKQ. Senf has been hosting radio shows for over four years in Ashland and Colorado.

of its East Hersey location, but all that has changed with the installation of a more powerful antennae and new transformer on Mt. Ashland. KSKQ now expects to hit 560 watts by mid March, enough to reach residents in Phoenix, Medford, and possibly Gold Hill. And with new power comes a new identity. Last week the more than 60 volunteer programmers and staff members came up with a new slogan: The People’s Voice in the Valley. “In the beginning the antennae was homemade—literally, we had a bottle cap glued on,” recalls Carson Bench, a former station manager who is still highly involved in station operations. After moving to Medford in 2007, Bench was excited to learn there was a small non-profit station broadcasting from Ashland; he had spent several years as a programmer at a community radio station in Point Reyes, California and had caught the radio bug. However, KSKQ was not on the air yet, and many of the people involved had moved away or given up hope. Bench wasn’t deterred. “I had a vision of what the radio station should be like, because of my personal experiences.” He began managing the station while also hosting his signature music shows “Latitude 42” and “Furious Fists of Funk.” A few years later

relieved the station is finally moving forward. “It’s definitely starting to become what it’s supposed to be...It’s starting to pop,” Ellen Hufft, the current station manager, agrees. “I just had my one year anniversary at KSKQ and the growth is astonishing. The station has grown in the community, the programming has grown and is more diverse, and all of us as have grown as people being involved.” It’s a story of rags to riches, or at least “rags to blue jeans,” according to KSKQ treasurer Connie Saldana, who says the station still has a long way to go financially. Fortunately KSKQ has received technical assistance from volunteers such as Michael McGuire, an electrical engineer who has helped with all phases of installation, and sound engineer Michael Mulhall. A small but dedicated cast of local underwriters and community donors have helped the station financially, and then there’s the myriad of volunteer radio show hosts, a job so coveted there is now a waiting list. KSKQ offers a morning news show from 7:00 to 9:00 AM, talk shows covering everything from art to cannabis, and music shows to suit a variety of tastes. Syndicated programs include Democracy Now!, Rock School, and The Latin Alternative. For more information or to get involved, visit [www.kskq.org](http://www.kskq.org).



## Citizens for Peace & Justice



[www.cpjmedford.org](http://www.cpjmedford.org)

**CPJ MISSION**

Embracing peace within ourselves.  
Calling peace into conflicted lives.  
Promoting a just and peaceful community.  
Educating ourselves and others on alternatives to violence.  
Educating ourselves and others on social justice issues.  
Protesting wars, war-like actions, and unjust laws and unjust actions.  
Building a world beyond war through nonviolent means.

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

**CPJ & Occupy Medford Film Nights:**  
7 p.m. 2nd Tuesday of each month  
Adams Room, Medford Library

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

**For more information email or call:**  
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[hallmark@gmail.com](mailto:hallmark@gmail.com); 541-897-0135

## BE THE MEDIA!

**If you have an event, announcement or call to action, let us know!**

Email to [editor@rvcommunitypress.com](mailto:editor@rvcommunitypress.com) or call our hotline

**541-622-9483.**

# INDEPENDENT MEDIA WEEK

10TH ANNUAL ROGUE VALLEY INDEPENDENT MEDIA WEEK

**APRIL 13-19**



Analysis

# Senator Wyden: ‘Fast Track is as outdated as a floppy disc’

BY IVEND HOLEN

On Thursday, March 20 a delegation of local citizens concerned about the Trans-Pacific Partnership and accompanying Fast Track legislation delivered more than one hundred 5 1/4” floppy discs to Senator Ron Wyden’s field office in Medford. These obsolete computer discs contain the digital signatures of thousands of people from throughout the country who have added their signatures to the following statement found on each disc:

*“Senator Wyden: Fast Track is an outdated and inappropriate way to negotiate and approve 21st Century trade agreements. Please oppose Fast Track and insist the public has a meaningful role in the creation of all future trade pacts.”*

The signatures were collected on a Citizens Trade Campaign website over the past several weeks, and, in order to make the signatures visible to the good senator, were printed on adhesive labels attached to the

floppies, with each individual disc containing the names and states of ten concerned citizens. So many signatures were gathered that the deliveries of the floppies was apportioned out to the senator’s field offices throughout the state, including Portland, Eugene, Bend, La Grande, and, of course, Medford, with each office planning to deliver several hundred discs to the field offices during the upcoming March 2014 Congressional recess.

The various delegations delivering the floppies to the field offices are making the following points:

• **Fast Track is outdated and obsolete:** Fast Track is an outdated mechanism for

negotiating 21st Century trade agreements. Fast Track was first cooked up during the Nixon Administration, when trade agreements were primarily limited to items like tariffs and quotas. Today’s trade agreements affect internet protocols, energy policy, government purchasing decisions, access to medicine, food safety standards, financial regulations and more. Using an obsolete trade policy-making procedure that restricts Congress and the Public’s ability to influence these policy arenas is completely inappropriate.

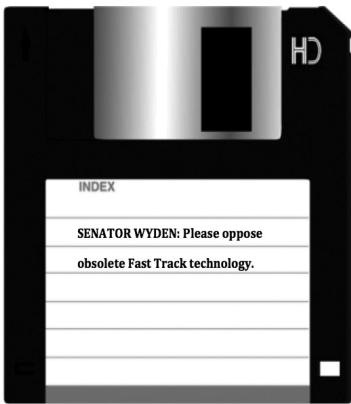
\* **Need for transparency remains:** As chair of the Senate Trade Subcommittee, you

wrote to constituent groups that “U.S. trade negotiators should be required to — at a minimum — share with the public the proposals they are putting forward, as they put them forward, in negotiations.” At present, Fast Track would enable trade negotiators to keep their proposals hidden from the American public until after negotiations are completed, pacts are signed and amendments are prohibited. Fast Track must be abandoned. Any new trade negotiating procedures should require U.S. proposals for trade and investment pacts to be published in as close to real-time as possible.

\* **Better negotiating objectives alone are insufficient:** With reports that the Obama administration’s pending trade agreements may fail to live up to even Bush-era pacts on items like environmental protections, worker rights and access to medicine, it is tempting to focus on the “negotiating objectives” included in trade

authority legislation. But without fundamental changes to the underlying Fast Track process, negotiating objectives are all too easy for negotiators to ignore and all too difficult for Congress to enforce. Indeed, there is a long history of negotiating objectives added to Fast Track grants being ignored by trade negotiators. The Fast Track mechanism itself must be discarded. Any replacement must enable Congress and the public to weigh in on whether negotiating mandates have been met before a pact can be signed and Congress limits itself to a take-it-or-leave-it vote.

\* **The process for replacing Fast Track should also be participatory:** As the Senate Finance Committee considers how to replace the outdated and obsolete Fast Track mechanism, opportunities should be created for other Members of Congress, civil society organizations and the general public to weigh in.



## Strong post offices make stronger rural communities

BY WES BRAIN

Though it’s been a fairly mild winter here in Oregon, most of the country has experienced record cold, snow and ice. News reports show cancelled flights, traffic snarls and closed businesses and offices. But you know what? The United States Postal Service (USPS) kept right on delivering the mail all over the country, just like it always has.

In rural Oregon rural communities like ours, the United States Postal Service also serves as a lifeline for basic necessities. The post office provides essential services that help local businesses, farmers and ranchers prosper and provide jobs. In 2006 the Republican-controlled Congress forced the USPS to pre-fund retiree benefits for 75 years, far longer than any agency or business. Prompted by corporations like FedEx, Congress also made it illegal for the USPS to provide services beyond the “retail of mail.”

These blows weakened the USPS, forcing it to shift its main focus from delivering the mail to surviving financially. Everyday people, small town communities and local businesses suffer the consequences.

Rural Oregonians know our communities need and deserve

more. Along with the Rural Organizing Project [www.rop.org](http://www.rop.org), small towns are banding together and declaring that we can do better. As our economy and country continue to shift, why can’t the United States Postal Service change with it? What if we expanded delivery to seven days? What if we left our post office lobbies open 24/7 as places to rest and get out of the weather? Most of rural America does not have access to broadband internet, but every small-town post office does. What if the Postal Service opened their internet for community access?

Congressional restrictions phased out copying services and phone card sales. What if our post office was allowed to compete for that business? The USPS used to offer postal banking, a service many countries’ postal services provide today. If returned here, what could that service do to boost the local economies of rural towns across the country? Postmasters and rural letter carriers often check in on folks when their mail piles up. Why not allow families to contract with mail carriers to check in on the elderly or stop in town to pick up needed grocery items?

Post office lobbies across the country serve as the hub for spreading the latest community news and organizing responses

to natural disasters. What if we could expand that community niche to include book exchanges, tool lending libraries or a one-stop shop for government services? Would the USPS stay in financial crisis if they could sell fishing licenses and provide other services in rural post offices?

For the last two years, small towns in rural Oregon have been scrambling to save their local post offices. First, 43 were slated for immediate closure, but were spared thanks to tireless organizing by those communities. Then 124 post offices faced severe hour and service cuts, some were closed and many now operate just a couple hours a day without a Postmaster. The Salem mail processing plant was closed in June, and Oregon mail processing plants are slated to close in Pendleton, Bend and Springfield. These plant closures mean that sending a letter from Baker City to La Grande will require a 560-mile trip to and from Portland’s mail processing plant first.

In a country where not a cent of our taxes goes to fund the USPS (yes, that is true), it is time to address the priorities that we Americans hold. Shouldn’t the ability to engage in the most basic form of communication –

### What is “Fast Track”?

VIA CITIZENSTRADING.ORG

Fast Track trade authority refers to special procedures for the negotiation, consideration, and implementation of trade agreements. The U.S. Constitution gives Congress authority over setting the terms of international commerce, and the Executive branch jurisdiction over negotiations with foreign nations. Fast Track, however, delegates Congresses’ authority to the Executive branch

so that the Administration is granted the power to negotiate trade agreements, draft implementing legislation to change U.S. law, and sign agreements into international law. Congress’s involvement is restricted to 20 hours of debate and an up or down vote on the final bill with no amendments allowed. Fast Track is an anomaly in terms of legislative procedure in which Congress generally goes through a multi-step process of writing, debating, and amending legislation.

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# Profitable corporations pay no Oregon income taxes

VIA OREGON CENTER  
FOR PUBLIC POLICY

Some highly profitable corporations are finding ways to avoid paying any state income taxes, Oregon and national data show.

At least 24 corporations that made a profit in Oregon in 2011, including eight with profits of over \$5 million, paid no Oregon income taxes for that year, according to the Oregon Center for Public Policy’s review of the most recent Oregon Department of Revenue data.

In total, 38 profitable corporations paid less than Oregon’s corporate minimum tax for tax year 2011, said Jason Gettel, policy analyst with the Silverton-based think tank. The corporate minimum tax increased from \$10 to a sliding scale ranging from \$150 to \$100,000 when voters approved Measure 67 in 2010.

Meanwhile, a national report released today found that, when adding up the income taxes paid to all states, 90 profitable Fortune 500 companies paid no state income taxes in at least one recent year.

“Thousands of middle class Oregon families are paying more in income taxes than some corporations pay after raking in millions in profits,” said Gettel. “Corporate tax avoidance makes it harder for our state to reduce overcrowding in our schools and invest in the other public structures that create a strong business climate.”

The ability of corporations to pay less than the corporate minimum tax -- even zero -- stems from an Oregon Supreme Court decision last year. Oregon’s highest court ruled that the trucking giant Con-way, Inc., could use a tax credit it had purchased to wipe out its minimum tax liability for tax year 2009, clearing the way for other profitable corporations to do the same.

“The decision left us with the Con-way loophole, whereby profitable corporations get away with paying nothing in corporate income taxes, not even our meager minimum tax,” said Gettel.

“When they raised the corporate minimum tax from \$10 a year, Oregon voters

wanted every corporation, and especially the profitable ones, to pay something to support the common good,” Gettel said. “Lawmakers should uphold the will of the voters and close the loophole Con-way created.”

While the Con-way decision revealed that the company paid no Oregon corporate income tax for tax year 2009, the identities of the two dozen or more profitable corporations that paid nothing for tax year 2011 are unknown.

“One of the shortcomings of Oregon law is that it keeps Oregonians in the dark as to how much, if any, a particular corporation has paid in state income taxes,” said Gettel. “If we had disclosure we’d be better positioned to close the Con-way loophole.”

Federal securities law, however, does require corporations to disclose the total amount that they paid in state income taxes.

Using that nationwide data, the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP) and Citizens for Tax Justice (CTJ) calculated the sum of all state

income taxes paid by each of 269 Fortune 500 companies that were profitable every year between 2008 and 2012.

The ITEP/CTJ report, 90 Reasons We Need State Corporate Tax Reform, reveals that 10 corporations paid no state income taxes over the entire five-year period taken as a whole, despite collecting over \$70 billion in combined profits, Gettel said.

Data on file with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission did not allow the researchers to determine the amounts paid in taxes to particular states.

Nevertheless, the report reveals that in some recent years a number of corporations with large operations in Oregon had a state tax bill of zero, or less, when adding up income taxes paid to all states.

Facebook, which opened a large data center in Prineville in 2011, paid no net state income taxes for tax years 2011 or 2012, according to ITEP and CTJ. The social media company reported nearly \$2.9 billion in profits over that two-year period.

In tax years 2008 and 2009, Intel “made more money by filing its tax returns,” Gettel said. Oregon’s largest private employer had a combined state income tax of negative \$40 million despite profits totaling \$9.4 billion in those two years.

“Oregonians have a right to know which large profitable corporations are using accounting gimmicks, special laws and loopholes to avoid paying income taxes on their profits,” said Gettel. “The time has come for Oregon to enact a corporate disclosure law.”

*The Oregon Center for Public Policy is a non-partisan research institute that does in-depth research and analysis on budget, tax and economic issues. The Center’s goal is to improve decision making and generate more opportunities for all Oregonians.*



## TECHNOLOGY BEAT

# New 3D-printers help blind parents see sonograms

VIA IACKNOWLEDGE.NET

Thanks to industrial designer Jorge Roberto Lopes dos Santos (with the Instituto Nacional de Tecnologia in Brazil), doctors have a groundbreaking new way to print sonograms for patients – at actual size and in 3D! This new prenatal sonogram will change the lives of many expecting parents, as they can now share an actual life-size three-dimensional model with their family and friends. However, the people this new development might mean the most to are the expecting parents who are visually impaired. While these parents may have been excluded from seeing early photos of their developing baby in the past, this 3D

innovation could change that! Tecnologia Humana 3D, dos Santos’ company, has discovered a way to create a three-dimensional computer model using the data from sonograms – even though their original goal was only to enhance prenatal diagnostic tools! Dos Santos soon realized that these printed models would give visually impaired couples something they’d been excluded from before – meeting their babies in utero. Dos Santos explains:

“We work mainly to help physicians when there is some eventual possibility of malformation. We also work for parents who want to have the models of their fetuses in 3D.”

Using highly sophisticated programs, Tecnologia Humana can create detailed simulations



3-D image of 11 week fetus. Photo by Tecnologia Humana 3D

of a fetus’ anatomy that doctors can then virtually examine. They’re able to zoom in on the lungs, look through the cavities of the heart and explore the fetus’ body for the early detection of any health issues. Dos Santos reveals that previously, these virtual examinations have found Down syndrome and cleft lip.

Once the virtual model is created, it’s time for the last step – putting that data into a 3D printer – a vital step for a visually impaired mom-to-be. Neva Fairchild, the resident expert on independent living at the American Foundation for the Blind, adds that dos Santos’ 3D models would also be helpful to visually impaired family members that want to see their loved one’s unborn child. Fairchild, who is also legally blind, says:

“Fifteen months ago, my first grandchild was born and they had numerous sonograms and I

missed out on all of that.”

The models, which are exact replicas of what is developing in the mother’s body, allows those with impaired vision to get a good idea of the fetus’ size – as well as amazing details like tiny fingers and toes.

Fairchild warns dos Santos that many inventions designed to aid the visually impaired are extremely expensive and

unaffordable. Unfortunately, most insurance policies don’t want to cover expenses of this nature. However, dos Santos says that his costs are relatively low due to his reliance on common imaging techniques such as MRIs and CT scans.

A full model of a fetus at 12 weeks, for example, will only cost about \$200. As the fetus grows, so will the cost in small increments. For example – at 24 weeks, the face and arms of a fetus would increase to \$300.

Still, this is an exciting development for expectant parents who are legally blind, and it will surely be much-appreciated.

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News

Local farmers speak out on commission report

BY JASON HOUK

Farmers, community members and GMO-free activists filled the Jackson County Commissioners meeting on March 19th to demand the commission retract cost claims made for ballot measure 15-119, a measure restricting the growing of Genetically Engineered crops in the Rogue Valley.

According to a report by County Administrator Danny Jordan, enforcement of the measure could cost the county a minimum of \$219,000 per year. According to Jordan, enforcement of the measure would require a full-time code inspector, time dedicated from a hearings officer, a contractor for testing and other county resources,

GMO free activists counter that argument, saying there is nothing in the ballot measure that would make it mandatory for the county to enforce the law.

"We feel like they were full of inaccuracies and they owe us to have a responsible cost estimate," said Elise Higley with Our Family Farms. "I hope that they will just act prudently and retract the report and come up with an unbiased and truly neutral report on the proposed costs."

Higley says local farmers want more research to be done by the board to come up with accurate numbers.

"They should have contacted the three counties that have already passed the ban on GMO's and with our research and talking to them, they have had minimal to no cost what so ever," Higley said.

At the public hearing, Commissioner Don Skundrick conceded that the measure could cost thousands or nothing at all depending on how the new ban is enforced.

"The administration said early on the numbers estimate and it may cost nothing. if no one complains and we don't have to do anything the cost to the county would be zero," Skundrick said

Commissioners say they will take all public comments into consideration and discuss the issue before elections in May.

If voters approve it in May, Measure 15-199 would be unique among Oregon's 36 counties. The Oregon Legislature has since voted to pre-empt local regulation of genetically modified crops, allowing only the Jackson County measure to be grandfathered in.

RIOT

CONTINUED FROM 1

sweeping down the sidewalk they created a bottleneck and citizens of all ages began to be pushed off the curb and into the street. This was in direct conflict with what the event organizers had pre-arranged with police. Order and exuberance were replaced by chaos and fear. In the ensuing melee, an elderly man was pushed to the ground by the first line of police, I was shot multiple times at close range with 'less lethal' rounds and then beaten with a baton. A young mother and her toddler were pepper sprayed, and countless other individuals faced serious physical and later psychological injury. All of this violence was without provocation. On October 14, 2004 the police had come for a fight.

Sadly, it was not the police's escalation of violence that night in Jacksonville that makes this incident unique. What made that night in Jacksonville different was that while we faced police violence under the guise of Presidential protection, the pro-Bush crowd who could have posed an equal hypothetical threat was untouched. We again learned that the criminalization of dissent can still rear its ugly face at any time and when it does, it often is enforced with a violent hand.

Ten years of Moss v. Secret Service has been a potent reminder that the process of seeking justice can be as powerful as the outcome of that search. In challenging the immunity and lack of constitutional accountability of individuals operating under the cover of government secrecy, this case continues to set precedent while addressing one of the darker corners of our legal system. If those in power are actively or passively given permission to act without accountability, abuse of our most basic rights will continue to occur.

Moss v. Secret Service (now Wood v. Moss) goes before the Supreme Court on March 26, 2014.

Michael "Mookie" Moss raises goats and farms in Jackson County and he is the lead plaintiff in our lawsuit. Mookie plans to attend the argument at the U.S. Supreme Court.

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"If you're not careful, the newspapers will have you hating the people who are being oppressed, and loving the people who are doing the oppressing."

MALCOLM X



"Where justice is denied, where poverty is enforced, where ignorance prevails, and where any one class is made to feel that society is in an organized conspiracy to oppress, rob, and degrade them, neither persons nor property will be safe."

Frederick Douglass - 1886



"Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe."

H.G. Wells - 1920

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www.occupymedfordoregon.org email: occupymedford@gmail.com

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# Shining a light into the darkness of suicide

## Suicide prevention measures help southern Oregonians

BY AARON LUNDSTROM

I had never associated Ashland with suicide. Sure, I read about Ashland’s homicides and rapes and the typical sordid sundries that many other communities produce. But suicide? Not once before moving and exploring here in early 2013 did I put Ashland and suicide together. I don’t know why exactly. Maybe it’s partly because Ashland’s a town that hosts Blissology University seminars, is home to those “Ashland is the Center of the Universe” bumper stickers, and harbors an exceptional number of smiling pedestrians. My disillusionment began, though, sometime around mid-2013 -- because of Twitter.

It was an early afternoon and I should have been writing. Instead, I was checking Twitter, which regularly fed me tweets from the “Jackson County 911” account, a non-official agency that provides real-time updates of fire and medical calls made throughout Jackson County. That day and too often on succeeding days, I’d see tweets that read something like this: Suicide, 1234 Something St., Time of Day, Town. The majority of these suicides were from places outside Ashland, including Medford, Talent, and others. But occasionally “Ashland” appeared in the suicide-announcing feed.

The Jackson County Sheriff’s Office says that of the 51 suicides reported in Jackson County in 2013, four of them were in Ashland. All men. One used a handgun, two others a rifle, and the other overdosed

intentionally on insulin -- all in spite of bliss, of universe, and of ambient smiles.

Reading a news feed about one suicide, and then another, and then another, and then another, and then realizing that among these people who chose to end their lives were some who lived my own community, felt about as helpless as trying to maneuver a vehicle down a steep, ice-slicked hill. And this feeling of helplessness is just a smattering when compared with the surrender felt by the suicidal.

Feelings of helplessness aside, though, health agencies such as the World Health Organization and the local Jackson County Suicide Prevention Coalition insist that suicide is largely preventable. And once a person does become suicidal, this prevention depends on action not primarily from the mentally ill, but from community partners, from the well, from the aware -- from you and me.

Dr. Gary McConahay, who works with the JCSPC and as a clinical director for ColumbiaCare Services, a mental health service provider in Medford, says that there are four steps a person can take when intervening in the life of a suicidal person:

- 1) Tell the person specifically what has made you concerned.
- 2) Explain how the action or actions are associated with suicidal thinking.
- 3) Ask directly, “Are you thinking about committing suicide?”
- 4) Call 541-774-8201 or 1-800-TALK, numbers for local

and national suicide hotlines.

An abbreviated form of this process is the Q-P-R method, which stands for Question, Persuade, and Refer. This requires asking if the person is thinking about suicide, persuading the individual to seek help, and referring the person to the right resources, such as a suicide hotline or a trusted counselor in the community.

But such preparedness to intervene is effective only when coupled with community connectedness. Not only does suicide prevention mandate that more people know what to do when confronted with a suicidal person, it also requires that more people develop an outgoing attitude toward other community members, partly by having a greater and wider grasp on who their neighbors are and how they’re doing.

One way to accomplish this is simply by taking an interest in those nearest to us in our workaday routines -- our immediate neighbors, our coworkers, our classmates, and so on. Additionally, there are more organized ways to reach out that have proven and could prove effective, whether that’s through a secular or faith-based organization. For example, the Jehovah’s Witnesses note on their official website, JW.org, at least two occasions in which Witness ministers, while in the course of their door-to-door and public evangelizing, interrupted people in the process of committing suicide, thereafter providing comfort and convincing these individuals to give life another

chance. Whether you want to call that divine intervention or simply being in the right place at the right time, the pattern is clear: the more we reach out to others, the greater the likelihood we’ll be a helping hand to someone, even to someone in a suicidal state.

One local program poised to provide greater community connectivity is Ashland’s Map Your Neighborhood program, a provision managed by the City of Ashland’s Community Emergency Response Team. The MYN program is designed to gather neighbors in order to plan for appropriate action after an emergency or natural disaster. When I conversed with Terri Eubanks, the program coordinator for CERT, she wouldn’t go as far as saying that MYN could help prevent suicide. She did, however, concede that some of Ashland’s MYN setups have indeed helped neighbors develop stronger relationships. As the MYN website notes, “Knowing our neighbors has a multiplying effect... Our daily sense of security is deepened when we know our neighbors and look out for one another.”

Furthermore, “*Neighborhoods that are prepared for emergencies and disasters save lives.*”

And when that disaster or emergency is someone planning to commit suicide, a nearby neighbor, a cognizant, readied and connected community, could just as well be the difference between a saved life and the end of one.

### SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS INCLUDE:

- Talking about feeling hopeless.
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain.
- Talking about being a burden to others.
- Social withdrawal or isolation.
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs.
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge.
- Displaying extreme mood swings.
- Behaving recklessly.
- Giving away prized possessions.

--Source: Jackson Care Connect

### LOCAL AND NATIONAL RESOURCES:

**Jackson County Suicide Prevention Coalition:** <http://suicidepreventionjacksoncounty.com>  
**Ashland CERT’s Map Your Neighborhood:** <http://www.ashland.or.us/myn/>  
**ColumbiaCare Services:** <http://columbiacare.org/>  
**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** <http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

# Drive for universal healthcare heads to Oregon

VIA HEALTH CARE FOR ALL OREGON

Activists from Chicago, Oregon, South Carolina, and Washington State have embarked on a three-state, 23-day “rolling demonstration.” Meant to spread the truth about true universal healthcare, the DUH caravan will travel through California, Oregon, and Washington. Their first stop in Oregon will be at Grants Pass, on Sunday, April 27, 2:00-5:00 PM. at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 525 NE 6th; then on to Roseburg for a media stop at noon on the 28th. Later that day they will stop in Eugene, with the time and place yet to be determined. On Wednesday, April 30, they have a date in Portland at the First UU Church, 1011 SW 12th Ave., in the Eliot Chapel at 7:30 PM. The next day, Thursday May 1, they are



due at 7:00 PM. in Salem at the Grand Theater, 191 High St. NE. Events will include rallies in San Diego, across from where Hillary Clinton will give the keynote speech at the annual meeting of the California Medical Association, and at San Francisco’s City Hall, live performances by singer Bob Wickline, screenings of The Healthcare Movie, discussions after the movie with filmmakers Laurie Simons and Terry Sterrenberg and DUH activists Sue Saltmarsh

and Donna Ellington, as well as local advocates, and informative presentations to medical providers. In addition, supporters are invited to drive with the caravan from city to city. Each car will be responsible for their own expenses and will decide how far they want to go. Identifying ribbons and bumper stickers will be supplied to all drivers! To see details of each stop on the tour, check the calendar at the DUH website . Follow DUH on Facebook and Twitter.

# Women’s International League for Peace & Freedom

From World War I through the 21st century, the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom stand together on issues of social justice, racial equality, and women’s rights. WILPF members have included Nobel Peace Prize Laureates such as Jane Addams, Dr. Linus Pauling, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



The Ashland branch of WILPF is a community of local women working together towards a common goal of peace and justice. Ashland WILPF are sponsors of the annual Hiroshima/Nagasaki Vigil and International Women’s Day Celebrations. Meetings are held on the first Friday of the month at 1PM at the Ashland Library and are open to the public.

For more information, contact Jill Mackie at (541) 488-9286 or email: [jmackie@mind.net](mailto:jmackie@mind.net)

**Women’s Power to Stop War**

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  - Blades of Grass (Jef Ramsey and Kathryn Casternovia)
  - Southern Oregon Rollergirls
  - And anyone we might have missed-- we appreciated every one of you!
- Your support keeps us going, fuels us so we can continue to be media watchdogs and continue to do what we love.
- Thank you!
- Vanessa & Jason Houk

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## Post Office

CONTINUED FROM 5

sending a letter affordably and reliably – be at the top of those priorities? Small towns are getting by without libraries, schools and other basics – some struggle just to have their phone lines maintained. Rural Oregonians are fighting for future generations to be able to live a rural life. Together, we are clear: expanding the services post offices provide is what rural Oregonians need to thrive. We believe this does not need to cost more, but it does require that our communities come first. The move to creatively envision and expand what small town post offices can provide is being advanced by the Rural Organizing Project and small town groups like Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice across the state.

## Indymedia

CONTINUED FROM 1

throughout the week. The SOU Media Movement will be showing student-produced films at the Southern Oregon University campus on Monday, April 14 at 7:00 PM.. On Tuesday, April 15, Occupy Medford will be hosting a film program at the Medford Library Adams Room starting at 7:00 PM. The films will include locally produced shorts that demonstrate the ways media can be used in direct action. On Wednesday, April 16 there will be an open house at the Rogue Valley Television / Digital Media Center on the SOU campus. Activities scheduled include a potluck BBQ and workshops on Fair Use and the strategic use of social media. Visitors to the DMC will be able to make “Soapbox” speeches before a green screen in the RVTV studio. On Thursday, April 17 there will be keynote event at the Meese Auditorium at Southern Oregon University featuring a panel of local experts in independent media production and publishing. Also throughout the week there will special independent media-related content broadcast on Rogue Valley Television and KSKQ 89.5 FM community radio. For a complete schedule of events visit www.rvcommunitypress.com, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/IndyMediaWeek and on Twitter at @IndyMediaWeek.

# Karen Jeffery’s On the street

Whereby our roving reporter takes timely questions to people on the street.

Our fearless columnist is traveling this month on two southern islands in Thailand - a haven for global citizens - and asked people on the beach: “What brought you here? What keeps you here?”

Max Klepfer

Hawaii, USA. Retired Restaurateur & Realtor. On Koh Samui 20 years

I came to Samui originally to meet my daughter, who was serving in the Peace Corps up north of Chang Mai. On her vacation, she brought a nine-year old girl student who had never been out of her village. That was one week in 1994. I stayed on 5 more weeks, then went back to Hawaii to wrap things up there. I stayed because friends put up \$40k for a bar/restaurant on the beach, and I became a 50/50 managing partner. I started doing some real estate, buying land, and now I have a retirement visa and live off a little business and my social security. I live very well on about \$17,000 tb (US\$600 a month)

Peter Gans

Newport Beach, CA, USA. Mortgage Broker. Now part time solar rep and bartender, on Koh Phangan 8 years

I came for a week’s vacation due to the cheap (post tsunami) tickets (\$400 RT). I was a refugee from the economic meltdown. I stay for the fabulous people, delicious food, fun parties, and laid back beach lifestyle... chilling from the stress of my former life. When the mortgage market fell apart, I stayed since it was so affordable here. I spent \$5,000 a month to live in Hawaii. It costs less than \$1,000 to live here. Now I only leave to see family in the states and Europe.

Massimo bin Badden (‘mad Max’)

Trieste, Italy. Retired chemical engineer, on Koh Phangan 10 years. Unofficial mayor of Haad Yuan

A cat brought me here. Siamese (haha). I stay because there’s no better place. It’s the sum of things, multiplied by many factors: Nature. Beauty. Weather. Cats. Here’s my list of why I stay: good beach, good food, good parties, good people, and an affordable bungalow. This is a recurring community of people who build relationships. All my friends are here.

Demi Poyiadzis

Cypress. IT Project Manager (now professional honey-mooner), on Koh Samui 2 years, Koh Phangan 2 years

After the economic crash in Greece, I needed work, so I came for employment and retrained as an English teacher on Koh Samui. I met the love of my life on Koh Phangan, and we love it here. I enjoy the beaches, weather, food, friends, massage, dancing on the beach. I like being off the grid, away from my government and most controls, living outside the western system.

Natalia Volamberg

Moscow, Russia, Psychotherapist and Writer, on Koh Phangan over 10 years

Karma brought me here. And the call of adventure. I took a small path from Haad Rin and ended up here in Haad Yuan. I stay for Massimo, DJ David, music, dance, the beauty of this place. People are so kind here, not aggressive like back home. I’m non-violent by nature, so this place matches my nature. I have to go back to care for my dad soon, so I’ll take the peace and beauty back.

Karen Jeffery is a freelance writer, publicist, photographer, publicist, activist, and resource unlimited. Reach her at mauitutu@gmail.com.

ROGUE VALLEY COMMUNITY PRESS



# Small family farm fights big agribusiness

BY GREGG MARCHESE

In mid-February, residents of Singing Bird Family Farm west of Grants Pass discovered an adjacent 35 acre field had been planted with genetically engineered sugar beets. Syngenta is a multi-national chemical corporation overseeing the growing of genetically engineered sugar beets for seed in both Jackson and Josephine Counties. Singing Bird residents Ted Talk and Lynn Colley-Talk have been on their family farm raising bees and selling honey and other bee products for 6 years, and the property has been in the family for 28 years. Ted was born and raised in the area, a resident for 50 years.

The incident started when Ted and Lynn noticed busloads of workers driving through the right-of-way to the neighboring field. This 35 acre field is up against the Applegate River, upstream from the confluence with the Rogue. It is owned by a neighboring family. The land is leased to Syngenta to grow genetically engineered sugar beets for seed, and another operator was hired to do the actual on-the-ground work. The workers were coming in to tend the field.

Ted explains that his discovery of such a nearby Syngenta field alarmed him. Singing Bird sells honey and other bee products professionally, and has seen the decline of its beehives in recent years. He has had to move hives to more remote locations to protect them from the impacts of chemical agriculture nearby. Despite claims by Syngenta, genetically engineered crops are thought to use more herbicides such as

the glyphosate-based Roundup, which can harm bees. Growing evidence shows Roundup and genetically engineered foods such as beet-based sugar can harm human health as well. Ted and Lynn are concerned about chemicals escaping from the neighboring field and impacting their health and livelihood.

Ted and Lynn reported rude threatening gestures from the farm workers on the buses when Singing Bird and its supporters gathered in the rain to display signs and express their concern. One worker was seen entering the garage of a neighbor’s house. Some of Singing Bird’s supporters observed members of the Josephine County Sheriff’s department monitoring the field for the first night, but thereafter a private security firm was seen to be monitoring the field. No trespass or harm ever occurred on the genetically engineered field.

Days later, farm workers removed the sugar beets by truck, but it emerges that this is a standard agricultural practice of Syngenta. The beets are taken to a facility where they are sprayed with more chemicals, a fungicide, then returned to fields for further growing for seed production. Ted’s research reveals that only select conditions are ideal for the growing of these GE sugar beets, and the Applegate riverside soil next door is an uncommonly large area that qualifies. The seed from these corporate operations could be worth millions of dollars, so the gathering of around 20 concerned citizens with signs is not likely to deter Syngenta. It is reported that the GE field was sprayed with

herbicide on the same day Singing Bird residents and their supporters gathered. One sign read ‘Syngenta Go Home’. Syngenta is based in Switzerland, where the growing of genetically engineered crops is banned.

Heavy applications of herbicide can flush into the Applegate river and contaminate water quality, fish, irrigation of other crops and livestock, and the ecosystem. Ted has swam, fished and rafted in the Applegate since he was a child, and is deeply concerned for how this chemical trespass will affect his hometown area. He has seen Syngenta purchase and lease land cheaply since the economic recession and drop in land values hit in ‘08, allowing this toxic and harmful form of agriculture to expand in the area and region. But the economic gains have been relatively small compared to the potential for the local economy to thrive with non-genetically engineered seed, produce, honey and other small family farm products. Syngenta’s profits leave the area and go to a multi-national corporation, while sales of locally grown and raised farm products such as Singing Bird honey circulate many times within the community, magnifying their effect. Tax revenues increase, property values increase, and the safety and livelihoods of long-time locals and conscientious newcomers alike are protected without the operations of chemically-based and genetically engineered agriculture like Syngenta’s.

Josephine County has qualified an initiative on the May ballot, #17-58, that would

FIGHT, 11

# Flood of campaign contributions breaks Jackson County records

BY ELISE HIGLEY

The political action committee opposing the Family Farms Measure has now raised more money than has ever been previously spent on a ballot measure in Jackson County. In fact, after taking in over \$244,945 as of today’s reporting, opponents of the effort to protect Jackson County farms from genetically engineered crops have raised more money that has been spent in all previous Jackson County ballot measures combined since at least 2006 and likely much farther back. (See state data below). The “Good Neighbor Farmers PAC” is fueled by major contributions from corporations heavily invested in genetically engineered crops like the sugar industry, and more than 95% of all of the PAC’s funding has come from outside Jackson County. The PAC’s \$244,945 was more than twice the previous record for measure spending. (\$111, 208 for 2007 library measure.)

“Voters are about to get hit with a tidal wave of scare tactics and misinformation,” says Elise Higley a Jackson County farmer and campaign manager for the Our Family Farms Coalition, “but it shows the opposition is scared and we think Jackson County voters are smart enough not to buy their political bull

just because they hear it on the radio and TV. We know the opposition did their polling a few weeks ago to identify what scared voters the most and that’s what we’ll be hearing a lot of. We’re really urging voters to read the measure itself and research all the facts.”

Chris Hardy a farmer who is also one of the chief petitioners that qualified this measure for the ballot agreed. “It’s no surprise that the corporations that are threatening our farms and our community with genetically engineered crops are going to try to spend whatever it takes to scare and confuse voters. But some of the claims we’re hearing are just so unsupportable, people aren’t going to buy them. The measure won’t take away money from the library or harm our farm economy – there’s just nothing to support that.”

“We’ve always known that as family farmers we’d be outspent by those siding with the chemical corporations that profit from genetically engineered crops,” adds Higley, “but that’s why we’re going door to door and encouraging farmers and everyone in the community to talk to their friends and family about the risks genetically engineered crops pose not only to farmers, but to our economy.”

# 1 job for every 3 people looking for work

BY DANIEL MILLS  
ECONOMYINCRISIS.ORG

The U.S. economy added 113,000 new jobs in January according to the government, far fewer than were expected. While some people blame this on the bad weather in several states, the real truth is that our economy is still struggling, because we aren’t built upon a solid manufacturing base anymore. Labor participation still remains at around 63%, which is the lowest it has been in decades. The BLS reports an unemployment rate of now 6.6%. This number does not account for the long term unemployed or those who have given up on finding work, and does not account for those who are only working part time. If we include these, that number climbs to around 23%. Additionally, for every 1 job opening in

the U.S. there are 3 people actively searching for work.

The vast majority of these jobs are in the service sector, of those 113,000 jobs only 21,000 were in manufacturing while 24,000 were in hotels and restaurants. What are we to expect, though, as “free trade” agreements such as NAFTA have stripped manufacturing from our shores. Our economy is becoming more and more based on service type jobs. 70% of our economy is now based on consumer spending, which means that when the economy is up and people are spending there is job growth, but when another recession occurs, those same jobs will quickly vanish. We continue to be sold the lie that American workers cannot compete with manufacturing in the rest of the world. These noncompetitive conditions were

not always the norm though. This is the result of “free trade” agreements which have stripped American jobs from our shores.

Since December of 2007 alone, we have lost 1.7 million manufacturing jobs, and there are still 1.3 million fewer total jobs. This is a direct result of our massive trade deficits due to “free trade” agreements. In that same time period we have had a trade deficit of over \$360 billion with Mexico alone. We must act now to regain our economic strength in the world. We must reestablish favorable trade policies that will help us compete in the world, by rewriting or getting out of “free trade” agreements such as NAFTA, and establishing tariffs and other protections to keep our manufacturing base strong.

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Lawson Inada visits to talk poetry

VIA JCLS

As part of Jackson County Library Services’ participation in the state-wide reading program “Oregon Reads 2014” celebrating the works of Oregon Poet William Stafford, Lawson Inada, local poet and former Oregon Poet Laureate, will provide poetry discussions and writing workshops. You won’t want to miss these chances to learn from a Poet Laureate. Visit one of the branches below:

- Tuesday, April 1,** 5:00-6:30  
Shady Cove Branch Library  
22477 Highway 62
- Saturday, April 5,** 2:00-3:30  
Rogue River Branch Library  
412 East Main Street
- Wednesday, April 16,** 1:00-2:30  
Ashland Branch Library  
410 Siskiyou Boulevard
- Sunday, April 27,** 3:00-4:30  
Ruch Branch Library  
7919 Highway 238

These programs are sponsored or cosponsored by the Friends of the Library. For more information, please contact Jackson County Library Services at 541-774-8679 or visit [www.jcls.org](http://www.jcls.org).

Green Party calls for liveable wages, not just a new minimum wage

VIA JC GREEN PARTY

Green Party leaders this month called for a liveable wage for working Americans, in contrast to President Obama’s proposal in his 2013 State of the Union address for a \$9 minimum wage to be enacted by 2015. “Instead of a minimum wage, working people need a wage they can live on. Anyone who works 40 hours a week should be able to afford a home, provide for others, and save money for the future. People who work hard deserve to enjoy economic security and prosperity,” said Mark Dunlea, a member of the Green Party of New York Executive Committee and long-time director of a statewide anti-hunger organization in New York. “The \$9 minimum wage is an inadequate improvement, not enough to lift many people who work hard at full-time and multiple jobs out of poverty and debt. Two generations ago, wage-earners could provide for a family of four on the minimum wage. Today, it’s difficult to provide for one person on the minimum wage, even on President Obama’s \$9 minimum, which falls far short of the 1968 federal minimum of \$10.50, adjusted for inflation. While worker productivity has increased, wages keep sinking,” said Mr. Dunlea. The Green Party’s national platform endorses the

liveable wage and the guaranteed basic income: “All workers, temporary or permanent, must be paid a living wage... We support the enactment of living wage laws that apply to all workers. A major consequence of this law will be the lessening of the ever-widening gap between CEOs’ income and workers’ pay... We also support other programs such as a universal basic income (known also as a guaranteed income or Citizen Dividend, as described in True Cost Pricing and Tax Fairness) that will provide for those who nurture the next generation -- work that is of incalculable importance to our society.” Green Party activists noted that a minimum wage that matched current productivity growth would be more than \$16.50 an hour and said that this figure should factor into the calculation for a liveable-wage guarantee. Greens said that enacting a liveable wage would boost the economy by providing millions more Americans, especially low-income families, with spending power. Establishing a single-payer national health care program (“Medicare For All”) would further ensure individual and national prosperity -- while slashing Social Security and Medicare, as President Obama has proposed, would have the opposite effect.

The Green New Deal, advocated by Green candidates including 2012 presidential nominee Jill Stein, calls for the creation of millions of new green jobs that pay livable wages. “Democrats and Republicans and media commentators tend to measure the health of our economy according to Dow Jones, profit margins of top corporations, GDP -- how much the rich are getting richer. Greens judge the economy by how many Americans have living-wage jobs with benefits, enjoy financial security and good health care, and are moving out of poverty,” said Cheri Honkala, the Green Party’s 2012 nominee for Vice President. When Barack Obama campaigned for President in 2008, he promised to raise the minimum wage to \$10 an hour. But when the Democrats controlled both houses in Congress, he took no action to raise the wage. Greens said that President Obama’s call for a minimum wage in 2013, when he’s unlikely to get such legislation passed in Congress, seems more about scoring political points than actually raising wages. “While Wall Street may be celebrating record high stock prices, real wages for average Americans continue to stagnate and decline,” said

Barry Hermanson, member of the California Green Party’s Coordinating Committee and former co-chair of the San Francisco Living Wage Coalition. In 2003, Mr. Hermanson co-authored San Francisco’s minimum wage initiative that improved wages for 54,000 people. “The political opposition to liveable wages for people who work hard is not only an admission that unrestrained capitalism doesn’t work. It’s a confession that they don’t really want it to work, except for the One Percent,” Hermanson said.

Fight

CONTINUED FROM 10

protect residents and small family farms like Singing Bird from the economic and toxic effects of genetically engineered agribusiness. A Yes vote on the measure would exclude the growing of gmo crops in the county, with no added costs to county administration. A similar measure, 15-119, is on the Jackson County ballot. *Gregg Marchese lives in Ashland, Oregon.*



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Monarchs

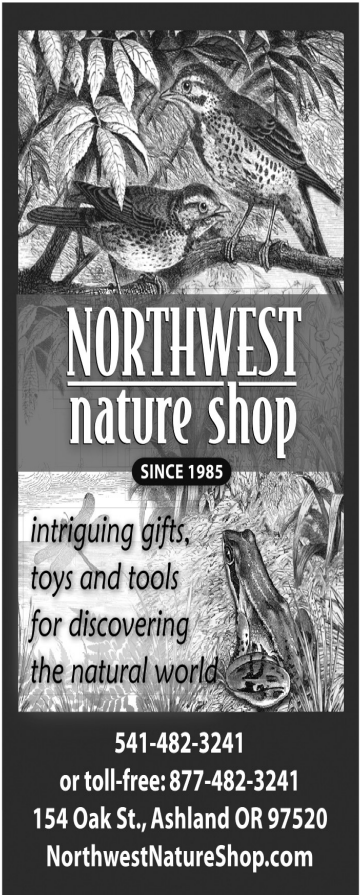
CONTINUED FROM 1

centuries to come,” said Carter Roberts, president and CEO of World Wildlife Fund. Monarchs have cultural significance as well. As the monarchs tend to arrive back in Mexico in early November, it coincides with the Day of the Dead and many people there believe that the butterflies are the souls of their loved ones coming back home. As butterfly colonies have declined, experts point to three potential reasons for their demise, climate change, deforestation and the destruction of milkweed-- a flowering plant essential to their survival. Karen Oberhauser, a professor at the University of Minnesota, and an expert on monarchs says that “Numerous lines of evidence demonstrate that the Corn Belt in the US Midwest is the primary

source for monarchs hibernating in Mexico.” She believes that the use of crops that can handle pesticides, Roundup in particular, is wiping out milkweed across the country and that the monarchs will follow. “These genetically modified crops have resulted in the extermination of milkweed from many agricultural habitats,” says Oberhauser. Chemical and Engineering News reports that a petition was filed by the Natural Resources Defense Council Fund asking the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to review of the impact of the use of the herbicide glyphosate, also known as Roundup. In 2015 the EPA will review the rules for glyphosate, something that the agency hasn’t done since the pesticide was first introduced in 1993. Back then the monarch populations were a billion strong. Now the annual migration is said to be in the millions. To further complicate things, the pollen from crops genetically

modified to resist Roundup can drift for miles, so that one farmer’s desire to use them will supercede the choices of all the other farmers around him. His Roundup resistant crops will contaminate fields and continue to snowball across the country, much like we already see in pockets of the Midwest. Will the combined promises of three international leaders be enough to save monarchs? In a statement, Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto said that all three leaders agreed to “create a tri-national working group for the conservation of the monarch butterfly”. We have agreed to conserve the monarch butterfly as an emblematic species of North America which unites our three countries”, he said. Wildlife experts agree. “Today’s declaration is a smart first step to save the monarch migration, but we can’t stop there. We must restore and protect habitat in all three countries, limit the use of herbicides in the U.S.

and Canada, and halt habitat loss from both, grassland conversion in the U.S. and deforestation in Mexico,” said Omar Vidal, Director General, WWF in Mexico. The mystery surrounding the great migration of one of Nature’s most flashiest insects is something that our future generations might be able to unlock if we do everything we can to preserve monarchs in the interim. Then the wanderer can soar into the hearts of our own descendants. To help counteract the destruction felt from these genetically engineered crops, readers can vote yes for Measure 15-119 and gardeners here in the Rogue Valley can be proactive in planting milkweed throughout southern Oregon.



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# Events

## Chamber of Commons event calender

**Chamber of Commons Event Reminder Calendar**  
*Thru April 19, 2014*

**Friday, March 21, 4:30 pm – 8:00 pm,**  
“GMO Conference at SOU on March 21, 2014 with UN Club SOU and Ospirg in the SU/SOU Ashland Campus at 4:30-8. Kathleen Gamer 541 621 3299”  
\*Economic and Ecological Issues with Genetically Engineered Crops - SOU Rogue River Room, 1250 Siskiyou Blvd., Ashland

**Sunday, March 23rd, 1 pm to 7 pm**  
Community Action Event Jackson Wellsprings 2253 Hwy 99, Ashland  
Speakers include Chris Hardy, Laura Bee, Swan Ramachi, Timothy Nobles  
Workshops & Open Space inspired community conversations  
*Sponsored by Chamber of Commons, Common Sense Sovereignty, Families for Food Freedom and the Food Integrity Project*

**Monday, March 24, 7-9 pm**  
Detecting Genetically Engineered Ingredients in Your Food - Ashland Food Coop, 300 North Pioneer Street, Ashland

**Thursday, April 3**  
Ray Seidler, Retired EPA Scientist, and Chris Hardy, local farmers, present “Economic and Ecological Issues with Genetically Engineered Crops” - Rogue River Grange

**Sunday, April 6, 2:30 pm**  
“Have Solar Energy at Night” Solar Expert Paul Smith presents as part of the Movement to Reverse Climate Change at Southern Oregon University Student Union

**Saturday, April 12**  
Move to Amend Event  
Volunteers Wanted  
contact Dave Hyde hyde-d@hotmail.com

**Saturday, April 12**  
Pear Blossom Festival, Downtown Medford & Alba Park  
Our Family Farms Coalition is looking for volunteers for tabling and parade. ourfamilyfarmscoalition.org

**Tuesday, April 15**  
The Biosafety Alliance presents on the impacts of genetically engineered crops and pesticides and solutions in Spanish and English at the Medford Library 7 to 9 pm

**Wednesday, April 16**  
The Biosafety Alliance presents at Eagle Point Grange 7:30 – 9 pm

**Friday, April 18**  
Phoenix Grange hosts the Biosafety Alliance informal food and speakers

**Saturday, April 19**  
Earth Day at Science Works, Walker Street, Ashland Oregon

**Climate Action Puppet Preview**  
The regular monthly meeting of Southern Oregon Climate Action Now will be Tuesday March 25th at Medford Public Library. At 6:00 pm, the Events Project Team will provide a sneak preview of the puppets and street theater that will appear during the coming season's parades and festivals. This will be followed at 6:30 by the regular meeting when activists engage in planning and development of projects to make a difference in our effort to counter climate change regionally, nationally, and globally. The meeting, ending at 8:00 pm, is free and open to anyone interested in promoting awareness and understanding about climate change or taking steps to address the challenge.

**The Commons** belongs to us all. Some things are sacred and must be preserved for future generations. Among these are: soil, air, water, ancestral seeds. ***The Chamber of Commons*** is currently grounding itself in local food security issues to promote self-sufficiency and sustainability throughout the Rogue Valley of Southern Oregon.

For more information: [championsofthecommons@gmail.com](mailto:championsofthecommons@gmail.com)

## 2014 Spring Plastic Round-Up

*Save Your Plastic for Recycling!*

The results of the spring 2013 round-up in early April was a great success. 63 volunteers (59 of them Master Recyclers) recycled 30,605 lbs. of plastic, from 660+ participants. It filled 3 and 3/4 53-ft. semi-trucks.

**2014 Spring Plastic Roundup Friday & Saturday May 16-17, 2014 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

Jackson County Expo, 1 Peninger Rd., Central Point at gate 1.5, the gravel lot just past the Family Fun Center

9:00 am – 4:00 pm  
Cost: \$5.00 per household or \$5.00 per cubic yard for businesses and large loads

**Acceptable Items:**  
SORT CLEAN & DRY plastics into these categories:  
Soft Plastic, Hard Plastic, Nursery Pots/Trays  
Find a longer list of items at [www.jcrecycle.org](http://www.jcrecycle.org)

# Claudia Alick to perform at MRG’s Justice Within Reach

VIA MCKENZIE RIVER GATHERING FOUNDATION

This fall, spoken word artists from across Oregon applied to McKenzie River Gathering’s Lilla Jewel Fund for Women Artists. All of the artists wowed the selection committee with their talent and their passion for social change, but we could only select one. We are excited to announce Claudia Alick as the 2014 Lilla Jewel Artist! Claudia is a powerful performer who uses her art to inspire people to see the world in new ways and to promote social justice ideals.

“I applied because the application came to me from six different people and I like to listen to the universe,” says Claudia. “I’m constantly dissatisfied with the world and want to fix it. And I am so glad that there are groups like MRG Foundation doing the work that needs to be done.”

A storyteller for change Claudia is a passionate spoken word performer who draws inspiration from her personal life and experience. She incorporates race, ethnicity, gender, and disability into her art and highlights the aspects of her and her audience’s identity that provide – or do not provide – privilege. “My work is autobiographical

and focuses on the truths that occur to me as I’m living my life,” says Claudia. “But I cover my truth in honey - it’s sticky, it’s sweet, and it’s super fun.” Claudia seeks to be a catalyst for social change through her art and she creates spaces where difference can live and be acknowledged, where people can dialogue, and where divergent experiences and ideas can come together to form a powerful narrative. She is a cheerleader and, especially, a storyteller for the work of social justice activists.

At the same time that her performances tackle complex issues, Claudia incorporates humor into a serious social change message.

“I’m passionate about my political positions. I do a lot of research. But most of my work is pretty humorous.” Claudia adds, “As a woman of color, I often laugh so I don’t cry.”

Activist, producer, director, and performer, Claudia has been both a volunteer with community groups and an artist as far back as she can remember and she has always integrated the two in her artistic work. In addition to her spoken word performances, Claudia is the associate producer at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF) in Ashland, where she

creates and curates works in collaboration with the local community. From Ashland’s Dr. King holiday celebration to fundraisers for student scholarships, Claudia’s work is a collective effort toward sparking social change.

“One of the reasons I was excited to join OSF is that allows me to activate culture change,” Claudia says. “It’s often subtle – but it’s a powerful thing to help folks realize that their preconceptions might

not be based in reality.”

Art can be a powerful tool for those who experience injustice to explore their experiences, share them with peers and policy makers, and inspire social change. MRG’s Lilla Jewel Fund for Women Artists promotes the work of women artists, particularly women of color and queer women, who advance a social change message through their art.

“The competition for this award was intense but the

committee unanimously agreed that Claudia was the best choice for this year’s Justice within Reach. We know those who attend this year’s event will find Claudia to be an insightful, witty, and engaging performer,” said Jeff Selby, chair of the Justice within Reach Committee. Claudia will perform at Justice within Reach on May 10, 2014. For ticket information Visit [www.mrgfoundation.org](http://www.mrgfoundation.org).



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